

REMARKS

The foregoing amendment and the following remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action issued on December 22, 2004 in connection with the above-identified patent application, and are being filed within the three-month shortened statutory period set for a response by the Office Action.

Claims 22, 23, and 25-42 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-21 and 24 have been canceled, and claim 22 has been amended to include the subject matter of now-canceled claim 24 and to also more clearly delineate between the preamble and the body of the claim. Applicants respectfully request further consideration of the claims consistent with the following remarks.

The Examiner notes that formal drawings are required in response to the Office Action. However, Applicants are of the belief that the drawings submitted with the application are already in formal form. At any rate, the Office Action does not reference any Form PTO-948 and does not otherwise state any deficiencies with the drawings as already filed. Accordingly, Applicants can only presume that the requirement for formal drawings was made in error, but nevertheless request that the Examiner immediately contact the undersigned should formal drawings indeed be necessary.

The Examiner has rejected claims 22, 23, 25, and 26 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph as being unclear. Applicants respectfully traverse the § 112, second paragraph rejection.

According to the Examiner, claim 22 in particular is unclear as to a delineation between the preamble and the body of the claim. Accordingly, Applicants have amended

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claim 22 to more clearly delineate same. As a result, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 112, second paragraph rejection.

The Examiner has rejected claim 22 under 35 USC § 103 as being obvious.

Applicants respectfully traverse the § 103 rejection insofar as it may be applied to claim 22 as amended.

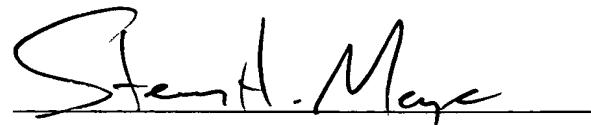
According to the Examiner, now-canceled claim 24 is allowable but for being in dependent form. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claim 22 to include the subject matter of now-canceled claim 24. Claim 22 and all claims depending therefrom including claims 23, 25, and 26 should thus now be allowable. As a result, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 103 rejection.

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In view of the foregoing, and in view of the Examiner's indication that claims 27-42 are allowable, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application including claims 22, 23, and 25-42 is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: March 1, 2005

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